

How to transfer files from USB stick to Desktop

Trying to explain this process is like herding cats as there are many ways to do the job, many computers behave differently due to what settings previous users have made, and there are significant differences in appearance between XP and Vista / Windows 7. This sheet details one way of doing the transfer.

So let's get a firm idea of the basics:

- The program we use for the transfer is called Windows Explorer (you may know it as My Computer, Computer, My Documents, My Pictures ad nauseam)
- The basic technique is always the same:
 1. Start and, and if required configure, Windows Explorer so the Folder pane is visible
 2. Explore the USB drive and locate the file(s) or folder(s) to be copied
 3. Copy them to the clipboard
 4. Locate and explore the drive and folder that you want to copy them to
 5. Paste them from the clipboard to this location
 6. Briefly twiddle your thumbs whilst the transfer takes place. Check the results.

Detailed steps

1. Plug the USB drive into the computer. Ensure it is around the right way. Do not 'jam' it in.
2. Wait about 10-20 seconds for the computer to recognize it, longer if you get a message that it's loading drivers. Then one of three things should happen:
 - IF you get up a screen that asks what do you want to do with this newly connected drive then select 'Open Folder To View Files'. This will start Windows Explorer.
 - IF nothing happens, then hold down the Windows key and tap the 'E' key to open Windows Explorer. (Or double click My Documents, or My Computer on the desktop or Start menu – anything to kick Windows Explorer into life).
 - IF Windows Explorer automatically opens to show the files then buy a lottery ticket!
3. Next thing is to ensure that Windows Explorer is configured to show the Folder Navigation view panel on the left side of the Windows Explorer program. If it is not showing then click the 'Folders' button on the toolbar. Or select 'Show Folders' in the View menu.
4. Now, using the left side navigation panel, locate the USB Drive. You may have to scroll the navigation panel to locate it.
5. Click the USB Drive so that its contents are shown on the right side contents panel
6. Locate the required file(s) or folder(s) in the right side contents panel.
7. Right click on the required item and select 'Copy'. Bugger all will appear to happen.
8. Go back to the left side panel. Locate the destination that you want to copy the files to. In our case it is the Desktop.
9. You now have two choices:
 - Either right click on the desktop in the left side panel and select Copy
 - OR click on the desktop in the left panel so that its contents are shown in the right pane. Then right click on the appropriate folder or blank area in the right hand side contents pane and select Copy.
10. Twiddle thumbs briefly whilst the copy takes place.
11. Confirm that the file(s) or folders(s) have copied.

Notes:

- Copying from the Desktop to the USB drive or from anywhere to anywhere else is exactly the same steps. It's just the location and destinations that change.
- To move file(s) or folder(s) from one location to another you use 'Cut' instead of 'Copy'
- There are other ways such as dragging file(s) and folder(s) to a new location however you need to watch the cursor shape, be careful when releasing the mouse and check the results. Dragging within folders on a Drive moves the files. Dragging between drives copies the files.
- You can select multiple file(s) and/or folders(s) using Shift clicking or Ctrl clicking methods.
- You can have multiple sessions of Windows Explorer open and then Copy/Paste or Drag between them. If doing a lot of manipulation then two copies tiled on the desktop works very well.